

# BLUE GRASS BLADE

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*DEVOTED TO THE PROPAGANDA OF FREEDOM OF THOUGHT*



W. T. FICKLIN

Kentucky Pioneer and Foe to Superstition.

# WILLIAM THRELKELD FICKLEN

(By Harmon Stitt.)

Some time ago we published a good likeness of William Threlkeld Ficklen, one of the oldest and most highly respected citizens of Paris, Kentucky.

During the editorial career of the late C. C. Moore it was not necessary to introduce Mr. Ficklen to the readers of the Blue Grass Blade. The two men were intimate friends, and Mr. Moore often referred to "Brother Ficklen" in terms of commendation. It was the knowledge of this attachment each had for the other that caused the two to be placed in the Bourbon county jail. Mr. Moore published certain articles reflecting upon Paris people that resulted in his arrest and conviction. It was charged that Ficklen had furnished the information, and was therefore culpable. A warrant was issued for him; he was arrested and told that he must give bond. Though a half score of the most substantial citizens of Paris were willing to become surety for him, Mr. Ficklen refused to allow them to do so. Charlie Moore was already behind the bars and Ficklen did not anticipate a dull time in such company. He was committed,—then his prosecutors began to try to get him out. Ficklen at that time was a member of the Christian Church. For over fifty years he had lived according to its teachings. He was strictly moral; he was honest to the core; he didn't drink nor gamble, nor had he any of the lace-ruffled sins so common to mankind. When it was learned that he was in jail upon such a charge, the public began to take notice. Some said: "It's a shame!" Others, "A damned shame!" And they wanted to know who was back of it. The prosecutors rushed to Ficklen and begged him to give bail. Nothing doing! Then he was told he could go on his own recognizance. He knew he COULD, but WOULD'N'T. They thought he acted SO mean about it, but then, you must remember, Charlie Moore was in jail, and if Ficklen went out he would have to associate with the other fellows. He preferred to remain where he was. However, they deprived him of the pleasure. He was discharged,—any old way,—and there the matter ended, so far as Ficklen was concerned. In passing, it is but just to say that Mr. Ficklen did not furnish Moore with the items complained of. That was done by a Lexington newspaper man since dead.

This prosecution made an infidel of Ficklen. He withdrew from the church. He purchased Freethought books and began to study their teachings. It was a revelation to him. "Why," said he, "is it possible these men teach such splendid truths? How's this? I have always been told that infidels were blasphemers, liars, thieves, scoffers at women, and home, the sacred ties of love, honor, and marriage, and all that makes life pure and sweet! But it isn't true. These men are not what the preachers say they are. They teach the Beatitudes. They hold that motherhood is holier than priesthood; that the grandest altar is not half so sacred as the lowliest cradle. They teach that the true Lord is the laborer, and the true laborer the Lord. They are independent, self-reliant men and women who seem to hold a God responsible for their afflictions or sorrows, and do not put off until another world to balance the debits and credits of good or evil committed here." This discovery pleased Mr. Ficklen. That people could be honest, kind, sincere, without the intervention of superstitious rites, awakened his profound admiration. He decided to help the cause along. For years he circulated scores of Blue Grass Blades each week. He subscribed to the capital stock of the enterprise when it was launched. He gave thousands away gladly, believing they would set men to thinking and thus lead them to truth. Noticing the close alliance between the church and predatory wealth, he bought bunches of the "Appeals to Reason" and circulated them among the poor and believing and never sold one.

Mr. Ficklen is an uncompromising prohibitionist, like nearly all infidels. Having no hopes of life in another world, it behooves them to make this as pleasant as possible. He speaks of his early labors among preachers with a great deal of hilarity. One source of amusement to him was to call upon the ministers to announce local option speakers. Usually they refused. Sometimes they promised to do so, but would "forget it," or subsequently claimed that they learned it was a "political meeting," and they could not take politics into the pulpit. On a certain occasion none of the

white ministers would make an announcement, but a colored divine did so, insisting upon his members attending. Ficklen remarked to one who had refused: "I consider that negro the only white man among you."

Ficklen's jail experience is not the least of the indignities he has had to suffer for conscience's sake. Of course, the ignorant have dubbed him "crank," and the self-satisfied have bestowed upon him a patronizing smile as they condescendingly listened to his arguments. The stupid regard him as harmful, and the zealots rank him an enemy to mankind. All that one expects and is prepared to meet, but orthodoxy is not satisfied with opprobrium. It is satisfied with nothing but annihilation. It may come, by the fagot and the stake, or the slower processes of disintegration. It may come by injuring a man's business, or estranging his friends from him. In some guise it comes. It struck Mr. Ficklen in his most vulnerable spot. He bears it with equanimity, but it is his deepest wound.

For over forty years Ficklen has been a member of a certain great secret order. He never departed from its teachings through all that time. He paid his dues, visited the sorrow-laden, nursed the afflicted, spoke words of encouragement to the erring. He had never questioned a Brother's motives, nor sought to stifle his beliefs. "Lodge night" was looked forward to by him with pleasure, for he enjoys the company of young men,—believing in their dreams, their hopes, their aspirations. It is an ideal Order and it does a grand work. Protestants and Catholics, Jew and Gentile, meet around its altar and counsel for the good of the needy. But you know how orthodoxy despoils the beautiful, how it stifles every good impulse of the human heart. How it blasts and destroys wherever it touches. Well, it got into this Lodge, and has left an unsightly blotch. An orthodox member preferred charges against Mr. Ficklen. What do you suppose the indictment contained?—"That you denounce the Bible!" Do you grasp that? "Denounce the Bible!" Do you suppose that any of the great authors would feel insulted if this octogenarian would speak disrespectfully of his work? Would it not be to smile? But for speaking disrespectfully of a book claimed by these men to have been written by the living God,—mover and director of human events,—he who spins worlds and systems of worlds from the hollow of his hand as a child blows bubbles in the summer sun,—Mr. Ficklen, of Paris, Kentucky, burdened with the weight of over eighty years, was suspended for one year. Just previous to the trial, which had been ordered by the Lodge, one of the members approached Mr. Ficklen and stated that he had been appointed to defend him. Mr. Ficklen expressed his thanks. A statement was asked for as a means of making a defense. One was given, but the appolated attorney declined to use it, and demanded another. So another statement was given, but as the accused Lodge member was not allowed to be present at the trial he does not know to this good day whether it was ever used or not. The trial came to an end. Whether that the members be not contaminated by him, or that he he given time to purge himself of their presence, the verdict does not say. Of course, one cannot tell, and really it doesn't matter. However, let us not forget that Ficklen does not drink, nor take the name of God in vain, nor lie, nor steal, nor has ever sought to destroy the priceless innocence of childhood, but, God damn him, he spoke disrespectfully of the Bible.

Mr. Ficklen was born in Elizaville, Fleming county, Kentucky, September 16th, 1827. His father was a noted stock trader. Removing to Mason county, the senior Ficklen laid off the village of Fairview. Later he engaged in the wholesale coffee business in Maysville. Some years prior to the Civil War, William Threlkeld Ficklen removed to Paris. He has never married, his bachelor quarters being the resort of rare spirits who love a good joke, a clean story, a pleasant bock, or an occasional game of cards. He is hale and hearty and bids fair to live many years yet, in full possession of all his faculties. A rare character, who can tell the truth every time, who doesn't have to whistle for his courage, nor shout for his joy. He takes the world serenely, of philosophy his treasury is full,—but he speaks disrespectfully of the Bible.

# A PLEA FOR EQUAL SUFFRAGE

WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE ALLEGATIONS OF  
MRS. HUMPHREY WARD.

(By Marilla M. Ricker.)

Mrs. Humphrey Ward, of England, who seems to lie under coverture as most of the anti-suffragists do, after a short visit here rushed into print on the subject of Woman Suffrage. She told us what "we English" have done, which was interesting. She informed us that the situation in the United States was entirely different. She remarked that in four of our States the women have precisely the same voting power as men, of which we are very proud. In all the other States she said that women neither vote for municipal bodies nor sit upon them. Now I, having seen and conversed with a live woman Mayor from Kansas, labored under the impression that we had municipal suffrage there, Madame Ward to the contrary notwithstanding. Then she tackled the "Sphere", which we all know is very important, whether it has to do with Annette Killerman swimming six hours at a time, or some man milliner trimming a merry widow's hat, or a hat for a merry widow, or whether Annie S. Peck has climbed Mount Haurascaren, which is 26,000 feet high, or some man cook has invented a new sauce, or read and practiced Second Kings 21:13, when the Lord saith, "I will wipe out Jerusalem, even as a man wipeth a dish, wiping it and turning it upside down."

It is an all-important argument which I have heard threshed out for one hundred and fifty years, more or less, and is still in use by the anti-suffragists. The "Sphere" question dies hard; nothing but a spear can kill it. And the "spear" should know neither brother nor sister.

We are informed by the madame that "Physical force is it," in various ways in the modern state, and that women have no right to claim full political power in a state where they can never themselves take the full responsibility of their actions, because they can never be called upon to finally enforce them. To prove that the modern state depends ultimately on force, she cited that President Roosevelt's call for four new battleships upheld that position. She didn't mention what his idea of changing the spelling of our language, of tossing a coin to settle a political dispute, or advocating large families when the average parents cannot properly feed, clothe and educate them, or establishing the whipping post upheld, but she was certain that the call for the battleships upheld her position on the force question. Consequently no physically weak man should be allowed to vote. Diplomacy came next. According to the madame's version, no woman could understand it. I find in Stubb's Medieval and Modern History that an ambassador is a man who is sent to lie abroad, for the good of his country. I quote from the Century Dictionary: "Diplomat—One skilled in diplomacy." Diplomacy is the art of conducting treaties, representing the interests of a state or its subjects at a foreign court. Diplomacy means artful—artful means cunning, and sometimes cunning means deceit. I despise keyhole diplomacy and government by spies, and I believe in nations telling the truth as well as individuals. But for up-to-date mixed diplomacy of various kinds I call the attention of Madame Ward to one stanza of the late Dutch Reformed Hymn:

"A diplomat's wife named Marla  
Threw all the fat in the fire;  
But Teddy Rex ran quick,  
Waved aloft the big slick,  
Crying, Oh Maria! Maria! You are a ———  
Musical Instrument."

In that mixed diplomatic shuffle the Red Hat was lost, but Red Hats and purple robes should "cut no ice" in a republic.

Federal suffrage came next. Mrs. Ward seemed to think it dangerous, or would be, but I can assure her that it would be perfectly safe.

Finance and commerce were from her standpoint beyond the ken of women. We have women bankers and "captains of industry" all along the line. They certainly have been able to hold their own, if not other people's, like many male bankers.

I call Madame Ward's attention to the two great reforms in the franchise which stand out conspicuously above all others in English history,—the great reform bill of 1832, and the "leap in the dark" of 1867. Each became part of the Constitution as the direct result of an agitation far surpassing in violence anything witnessed on behalf of woman suffrage. A man will fight for his life and political liberty; a woman should do the same. A very bright and honest Englishman said not long ago, "One thing is perfectly certain, the women will get what they want sooner or later and the only reflection that troubles me is how foolish we men will feel when we find that although women are allowed to vote we are still permitted to live and move about and that in many respects the government that looks after us and our children understands the true interests and welfare of all of us in a more humane and enlightened spirit than it ever did before."

It is surprising that there are women who are unusually bright in many ways but seem contented with the position they occupy as non-citizens and political nonentities, content to be politically dead. There is the contentment of ignorance and the contentment of indolence. In the old slave days when Lincoln was told that the slaves did not want their freedom, he replied, "If they are so ignorant as that, they certainly need it."

These anti-suffrage women remind me of an old water mill, running with empty hoppers. Their wheels keep on going, but they turn out no grist. It seems needless to reiterate what we who are interested in equal suffrage know, except to enlighten those who are not particularly interested.

Here are some cold facts about equal suffrage:

Today we have full suffrage in Wyoming, Colorado, Utah and Idaho; municipal suffrage in Kansas; tax suffrage in Montana, Louisiana, Iowa, Michigan, and throughout all the towns and villages of New York State; school suffrage in Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire (and right here I want to state that New Hampshire was the first State in New England to grant school suffrage to her women), Oregon, Massachusetts, New York, Vermont, North and South Dakota, Montana, Arizona, Mississippi, New Jersey, Indiana, Illinois, Connecticut, Washington, Ohio, Delaware, and Wisconsin.

I have had many letters lately asking where trustworthy information concerning equal suffrage could be obtained. The writers said they had been told what suffrage the women had was granted as a joke and that was a long time ago and it was dying out fast. I immediately wrote, "Take 'The Woman's Journal,' send to the Journal office, No. 6 Beacon St., Boston, Mass."

I want to call the attention of all working women to the disadvantages of disfranchisement. The facts collected by the special committee on salaries of the National Educational Association show that in 467 cities of the 70,230 teachers (not including principals) all but 15,000 are women. The average yearly salary of teachers in elementary schools is for women \$970, and for men \$1,512. So you see that the disability of disfranchisement costs the women \$572 each per annum. That the sole cause for this difference in wages for the same kind and quantity of

labor is the disfranchisement of women is shown by the fact that in the four States where women vote their wages are the same as the men for the same work, and it is illegal to make any distinction in salaries of any persons in the public service on account of sex. It seems to me that any woman who opposes equal suffrage has no more sense than the billy-goat had that butted the hornet's nest.

Mrs. Ward has told you why you shouldn't have full suffrage; now I tell you why you should.

First, Because no race, class or sex can have its interests properly safeguarded in the legislature of a country or state unless it is represented by direct suffrage.

Second, Because politics and economies go hand in hand; and so long as woman has no political status she will be the "under dog" as a wage earner.

Third, Because, while men who are voters can get their economic grievances listened to, non-voters are disregarded.

Fourth, Because women are taxed without being represented, and taxation without representation is tyranny.

Fifth, Because women have to obey the laws equally with men and they ought to have a voice in deciding what these laws shall be.

Sixth, Because the legislatures in the past have not made laws which are equal between men and women, and these laws will not be changed until women get the vote.

Seventh, Because wherever women have become voters reform has proceeded more rapidly than before.

Eighth, Because all the wisest men and women realize that decisions based upon the point of view of men and women together are more valuable than those based upon either singly.

Ninth, Because politics has invaded the home and woman must therefore become acquainted with politics.

Tenth, Because so long as the majority of the women of the country have no interest in politics the children grow up ignorant of the meaning of the struggle for freedom, and lessons learned

in one generation by bitter experience have to be re-learned by the next in the same school.

Eleventh, Because all the more important and lucrative positions are barred to women and opportunities of public service are denied.

Twelfth, Because the possession of citizenship and the meeting together for political purposes and to discuss matters political stimulates the faculty for combined action, and gives of itself a greater power of economic resistance.

Thirteenth, Because grave questions, such as the death rate of children, the waste of child life, the employment of child labor, the employment of married women, and the care of the aged cannot be satisfactorily settled if the woman's point of view is left out.

Fourteenth, Because women like men, need to have some interests outside the home, and will be better comrades for their husbands, better mothers to their children, and better home makers when they have the ballot.

And to sum up all reasons in one—it is for the common good of all.

Men of New Hampshire you all know that the best government known to the race is found in a home where father and mother have equal power, as is the case in an enlightened family. No other place is so well governed, and the best interests of all who dwell therein are conserved. Reasoning from analogy, the larger home of society, and that largest home of all called government, would be improved by the assistance of its women. In the present age no state can afford to be deprived of the co-operation of its women.

Men of the New Hampshire Legislature, I hear that a municipal equal suffrage bill has been introduced into the Legislature. Our cause is a just one. I trust that every member of the Legislature will remember that the great figures in history are they who have battled for human liberty, and vote accordingly.

Dover, N. H.

## Whiskey and Superstition

Both Poison the Mind, and Both Ought to Be Put on the Same Footing.

(By Warren S. Dean.)

There are times when we feel like admiring the courage in others, even in the defense of a false, unjust cause that honest people have no respect for, when it is shown that those who honestly believe they are doing things according to the teachings they have been brought up under.

Take, for instance, the affray that happened in Kansas City a short time ago, when several crazed religious beings run a fleeing officer of the law to the police station, and the shooting that resulted in the death and wounding of a number of people, with the capture of the remaining divine gang. We regret there are so many, who, to satisfy their depraved traits, are willing and anxious to bring death and suffering to themselves and others, to uphold their ignorant, useless superstition.

Still more we regret that in this day and generation, thousands who still discard the dictates of reason to preach and expound the doctrines of that ancient history of ignorance. But what about the courage of

the majority of those who still preach those slavish doctrines? Do we, or can we admire their courage? Do we respect their beliefs any more than we can the beliefs of those crazed beings? No, we do not. We respect many of them for their moral uprightness; for the enjoyment and happiness they give to others in this life, and respect their common sense for not carrying into effect the depraved teachings of their most holy of holy books. But for courage, the far larger portion of them is as devoid of it as they are of reason; and the things that go to make useful lives for this world's work. In some respects they compare with the moderate user of alcoholic beverages, who may go through life with apparently no evil effects on themselves; but they can readily see the evil on those who will not, or cannot, use those beverages without being a curse to themselves and others. Seldom do we hear of a moderate or depraved drinker stuffing the young with their slavish habits for keeping the whisky trust (God) in existence, for the sole object of giving comfort and power to those who make profit by the sale of those beverages.

How would it be with the people if the

dealers in alcoholic beverages would get together and make a demand from the State and national government to have all taxes and licenses abolished; Not only demand it, but get it as fully as those who are dealing in the curse of superstition? If it is right to tax one product of nature, that people may poison themselves and turn into beasts; why is it not right to tax the poisons of the mind, one of the greatest factors that fills the insane asylums?

Perhaps the time will never come but what some people called human will make more or less beasts of themselves with superstition or alcohol, and the only just and right way is to put all such great curses of the human mind and body on the same footing. Giving no greater advantage to one than the other, but search history and find the truth about the blessings (?) they have done or left humanity. Think of how the dear pastors and priests will stand before their audiences and tell the truth about the curse of alcoholic drink, the crime and misery caused by it, the prisons that are filled by it, and the thousands of drunkards' graves that are made by it.

But do we hear the venders of alcohol tell the people what the product of superstition has done to and for humanity?



Only think, if by some miracle, we could transplant some of the intelligent people of our own time—those who have taken the materials of nature and used them jointly with nature's laws and forces, the product of their brains and hands for the many human needs, without prayers and slavish supplications,—if we could put them back in the time when the ignorant, brutal priestcraft was in full power, do you or can you think their fate would have been less different than the countless numbers that have suffered torture and death in those days?

If the time will never come that some people will not or can not use their reason

to keep from putting in their bodies and minds something that common sense teaches us is not only useless, but is a rank curse to humanity and to many who have filled their systems, there ought to be enough courage and honest energy left in the majority of the people to see that the minds of the young are not warped and debauched by the vendors of those rank evils, and put a little wholesome fear in the occupants of the cowards' castle (pulpit). Perhaps then all of those evils will be on the same footing; or at least will go to show up the courage and the true purpose of those who gather in the profits.

Delhi, N. Y.

## THOSE CHRISTIAN DEBATERS

One Preacher Misrepresented Huxley, Another Ingersoll, but Were Flashed by Proof in Each Case.

(By O. B. Fenton.)

While living at Bundysburg, Ohio, some seventeen years ago, we used to pass the winter seasons by indulging in debates on different questions in the School House, and between us, that is, both sides, we had some very interesting meetings. On one of these occasions I affirmed the following proposition:—

"Resolved, That the Bible is erroneous in many of its statements regarding Science and Morals, and is of human origin."

Pitted against me in this discussion was Rev. B. A. Allen, who undertook to deny. Another time I affirmed the following:—

"Resolved, That the services of Thomas Paine to the past, present and future generations of the world are of greater worth than those of John Wesley."

As in the former case, I was again opposed by Rev. Allen and we discussed the issues above presented on several different occasions.

In order to be able to keep up my end of these debates I had devoted more than two weeks in preparation, and I had twenty volumes at my command for reference and authority. Rev. Allen came armed with a Bible, Dana's Geology, and some other book which he used in an effort to falsify Thomas Huxley. He was so badly crippled that in his last and closing speech he put language used by William B. Glanville into the mouth of Huxley. This very language Huxley had criticised, and may be found on page 45 of the Huxley-Glanville debate. I had written to Boston for the published copy of this debate, and while it was lying in the office at Bundysburg at this very time, I had not had the copy in my hands. By eleven o'clock of the next day I had read the debate, and reaching the very language quoted, then, to show what a drowning man

will do, I took the book to several who were present at our discussion and these well remembered what the preacher had said. If I could have been as wise during the debate as I was then, the preacher would have heard something.

Two years passed away before I saw him again. I made no mention of his infamy. But there was another preacher, O. H. Pennell, who wanted a whack at me. He was attending college at West Farmington. The other preacher, Allen, had been a professor there. Pennell sent me word that he would like to debate with me, and asked me to call upon him. I did so. He declined to debate the proposition on the Bible given above. We agreed upon the following:—

"Resolved, That the civilization of the world is due to the Christian religion."

Although this took me into a different field of reading, I promised to be on hand. The next day I went five miles to get Drapers "Conflict between Science and Religion." When I left Pennell, he remarked: "I will show that Ingersoll is waning and coming to our side." I assayed by what authority. He answered by a paper that a neighbor of ours took. As soon as I got home I wrote to the neighbor, also to Col. Ingersoll, and their answers I have always kept together. I now give them to the public for the first time.

### One of the Letters.

Girard, O., Feb. 8, 1890.

"Dear Sir:—

"Replying to yours of January 31st, would say that I never saw such statement as you refer to, not in any paper, and never have I told any one that I had seen such a statement. For all I know, Bro. Ingersoll still holds his former views.

"Yours, etc.,

"JOHN E. LEWIS."

### Ingersoll's Letter.

"New York, Jan. 31, 1890.

"B. O. Fenton, Esq., Bundysburg, O.

"My Dear Sir:—I have not in any way changed my opinions except that I think a little less of what is called 'orthodox Christianity' every day. I return your letters, thinking you may need them. Thanking you for your kind expressions, I remain,

Yours very truly,

"ROBERT G. INGERSOLL."

The letters mentioned were written to me by the preacher Pennell, and when he found out what I had done the whole debate flashed in the pan, and Pennell failed to put in an appearance. I will add that this man has since become a Methodist preacher, and is now engaged in saving souls that were never lost.

Chardon, Ohio.

### He Wants Both.

BOONE, IOWA.—If I'm not mistaken I sent in my application for the Blue Grass Blade, bound, 1908. If ready send it and if not ready send it when ready, and I see that you talk of putting "Man's Origin and Destiny" by Dr. A. Hausman in bound volume; if so notify me when it will be ready to send, and I'll remit if I'm alive and I mean to be. I ought to have remitted long ago, this \$3.50, but just simply "forgot it." My banker don't work as good as it did 72 years ago, but better than it will 72 years later.—T. C. HONIE.

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# MAN'S ORIGIN AND DESTINY

ELEMENTS OF SOCIAL CONTRACT.—CONVENIENCE OF THE  
CHRISTIAN SCHEME OF SALVATION.—OPENING  
OF PART TWO.—MAN'S RELATION TO MAN.

(By Dr. A. Hausman.)

We found as the first condition of society, mutual guarantee of existence; the second is guarantee of the means of subsistence, which we obtain by labor. Property is the fruit of labor; without respect for the property of our fellow-men no orderly society could exist. The commandment: "Thou shalt not steal," expresses a natural compulsory law, which we obey because we have recognized its necessity, not because we expect reward or punishment in a hereafter if we observe or disregard it. The animals have property and are conscious of their rights. If a person steals or appropriates property belonging to somebody else, the criminal deed can never be made undone; it remains a stigma forever, though the material damage may be repaired by restitution. It is much easier, however, to settle the matter with god, to admit candidly the sin, play the contrite and penitent, charge the offense to Jesus, who has paid for it already by his death, and keep the money. Since years, I have read the accounts of defalcations and embezzlements committed by trusted private or public officials, and have found in almost every case, especially those which occurred in eastern communities noted for their intolerance and orthodoxy, that the culprit was a prominent member of the church. How convenient is this Christian method to get rid of duties against the members of society by pretending them to be superseded by obligations against an imaginary god. Who is the most selfish, the infidel who obeys the natural laws because he recognizes their necessity and would despise himself if he disregards them as much as he would despise some one else guilty of the same offense, or the Christian, who expects reward if he obeys them, but if he violates them pretends to repair the injury he has inflicted upon his fellow-man by performing some farcical ceremonies which he claims please god?

Another indispensable postulation of society is the observance of the commandment: "Thou shalt not lie." If the majority of the people did not voluntarily respect the truth, there could be neither social nor business intercourse, science or history. Deviations from this rule are the result of egoism in the struggle of existence. Animals, for instance, ants and bees, have the faculty of communication, but it is not probable that they can lie. Truth is the natural principle; lie is an artificial product, requiring more reflection and greater mental ability.

With these three principles,—regard for Life, Property and Truth—we have established the general fundamental

laws of society. If we avoid to injure the person or property of our neighbor, we can do no wrong, commit no sin. It is difficult for a person of ordinary intelligence to grasp the absurdity of the Christian doctrine of inherited sin. All we bring into the world are our natural instincts; they are the cause of all that is bad if not controlled by reason, and allowed to violate the sacred rights of our fellow-citizens; they are the cause of all happiness if kept within the bounds prescribed by the common interest of society.

People speak so much about *liberty*, and yet not one out of a thousand is able to give a correct definition. Still, it is easy enough to form a standard for the highest state of perfection of society, if we start from the natural conditions of existence as the premises for our deductions. If millions of men endowed with the same natural instincts, the same natural wants, live together on a limited space, *what can be liberty?* Nothing else but that the exertion of every one is devoted to a useful occupation, and that every one knows and does his duty. It is difficult to conjecture to what an extent the dreams of universal happiness may be realized, but since at the present the conditions for such an ideal state are sadly wanting, even among the most civilized nations, we may as well abandon all speculations in this direction. May it be sufficient to know the consoling fact that notwithstanding the affected humility of the religious devotees, who call themselves sinners in order to have a pretext to prefer the same charge against those who enjoy the blessing of free thought, there are thousands of people who live as righteously and as free as men possibly can on earth.

We have recognized as the universal law of nature the tendency to preserve the species or races which are the fittest to survive in the struggle of existence. The civilized nations rule the world because their superior intellect has supplied them with the greatest physical power. Every nation consists of a great number of individuals, having in common the same language and certain physical and mental features. Individuals change continually, but institutions and technical accomplishments remain and are transmitted from generation to generation. An individual born among a certain nation will grow up under the prevailing conditions, and his physical and mental capacity will be modeled and shaped accordingly. This influence produces a consciousness of integrity as a member of the community, and a feeling of responsibility in regard to the obligations we owe our fellow-citizens. This involuntary reflection upon the results of our actions in regard to the prevailing laws of society, is called *conscience*. It is simply fear, the knowledge of having committed a deed which we consider wrong, or having omitted an act which we consider our duty.

As a moral guide, therefore, the conscience is entirely worthless. It is only alike among people of various creeds to the extent to which the social laws are obeyed.

We find conscience in animals that are intelligent enough to be trained; for instance, in the dog, who often betrays a guilty conscience by his behavior when he has done something which he has been taught not to do. In his case, man has generated the conscience; in the case of man, nature takes the part of the trainer. Savages who bury their aged parents, the Thugs of India, whose duty it is to kill, have a conscience entirely different from our own. The old woman who carried a bundle of fagots to the stake on which Huss was burned, enjoyed an inner satisfaction which we are unable to comprehend. The conscience of those Christians who stood by and saw heretics and witches burn, differed from our own. A soldier who could not kill his enemy in times of peace, feels pride and satisfaction when he shoots a stranger he has never seen before, in battle, because his Christian conscience tells him that he is carrying out the will of providence, and that relieves him from all responsibility. He has sworn the oath of allegiance to the king, whom he believes appointed by god, and sooner than to break it, he will forfeit his life, fearing the punishment of hell. Conscience changes with the evolution of ideas which form its moral basis; it participates in the progress of a whole nation and the development of a single individual. If we change our views in regard to the moral value of certain things, our conscience changes too. When I was at school my conscience would lift its voice at occasions at which it has become silent since. To speak of god disrespectfully, to commit blasphemy, would have made it scream; now it does not murmur even when I express my horror and contempt for the monster the Christians pretend to worship as their god. But there are still people who cannot bear hearing god irreverently spoken of, and would gladly punish the blasphemer if they had the power to do so, because their conscience tells them that this idol cannot stand the scrutiny of truth and they are afraid to destroy the convenient delusion. In their arrogance they demand that other people shall stop thinking where they do, and shall not tell their opinion because it might rob people of their faith. It was stated above that it is impossible to convince anybody by force, the mind yielding only to the logic of facts, and if religion is built upon such a weak foundation of lies and deceit that it can not bear the touch of truth without falling to pieces, it is not worth to exist. We are not bound to respect the opinions of others and they are not bound to respect ours. If their religion is true and of a higher origin than human intellect, why don't they prove it by facts? We are not afraid that their arguments can shake the truth of science. But we do not claim the right to interfere with their personal liberty, while they have the impudence to demand that we shall not think any further than their limited mental capacity permits them.

The question of free will has been often dismissed, with-

out, however, arriving at a definite conclusion, which is an impossibility, because we have no means to measure and no standard to judge psychological functions. Our volition is free in proportion as we can foresee the effect of our action. The wild animals follow their natural instincts, but the sense of duty is undoubtedly developed already among those living in communities, like ants and bees. In the dog we find volition, the preponderance of duty over his natural instincts, as the result of training. In man there may be a conflict between the desire to gratify his natural instincts and the restraint exerted by the consciousness of his fellow-men's rights or welfare. Whatever may be the strongest impulse will decide his action. While in the majority of the people the sense of duty as members of the community is sufficiently developed to keep personal egoism, that is, the desire to gratify our natural instincts, within the bounds required for the general welfare, there are exceptions in which this personal egoism predominates to the detriment of society.

While the majority of men have not the least desire to murder their neighbor, would not be able to kill anyone if they had permission to do so, there are exceptions in which the brutal instincts predominate to such an extent as to threaten the existence of others. This murderous instinct is a legacy from the animal ancestors, and independent of any creed or belief. However, the Christian religion fosters the bloodthirsty propensities by attaching a subordinate value to human life on earth, instead of impressing the mind with its sacredness, and by promising forgiveness of god when it is impossible to make a criminal deed undone and to restore a lost life. The knowledge of safety from punishment will always turn the scales in favor of crime if there is a conflict in a man's mind between his better knowledge and his brutal instincts. In dealing with crime the question of moral responsibility ought never be considered unless a person was known and treated as a maniac before committing the crime. The enormous amount of crime in the United States is solely due to the absence or tardiness of punishment, owing to the insufficiency of the criminal laws and courts.

(To be continued.)

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The sum and substance of Freethought is to exalt man and to exalt man's notions of men.

\* \* \*

The poorest beggar is an earth passenger, even as you and I, and is privileged to look upon the sun.

\* \* \*

Love of knowledge stirs the mental pulse; the joy of discovery exhilarates the mind; to extend the realm of law and order brings a delight supreme to the heart of all true men and women, and between these emotions our little race of life is run to the end.

## BLUE GRASS BLADE.

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ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS to the Blade will be discontinued at the expiration of the term for which the subscription has been paid up in advance. The address slip on the paper will show subscribers the date of expiration of subscription. Back numbers or numbers omitted will be sent, if asked for, upon renewal in case of discontinuance.  
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## THE CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOL.

In previous issues a promise was made that we would in the near future, discuss the Correspondence School, and announce a new plan, or method, for conducting it, partly formulated by ourselves and partly derived from advices tendered to us by a number of friends who have taken an interest in the work sought to be performed thereby. We now apply ourselves to the task.

All who have written admit the necessity of offering to the young men and women of the country a wider, broader and more comprehensive means of education than that found in the average school, as a means of protecting the immature mind from the machinations of superstition. For this reason we feel that the School ought to be continued, but in another and different form. The plan of charging for tuition did not work. The sum so derived did not pay all the cost of printing, mailing, etc., and the labors given to it, falling altogether upon the Editor, were labors of love, without remuneration, save and except the knowledge that some one had been benefitted, however slight, thereby. Thus we purpose to continue the School, but instead of charging for the instruction given, it will be given free of cost to all Blade readers who care to undertake the studies, purchase the text books, etc. The only charge to be made will be that hereinafter outlined, and

will apply to lessons submitted for criticism and correction only.

The plan we now have in view is to print the examination questions in the Blade columns, using the Blade as a medium of communication, once a month. Four subjects will be taught. These are Geology, Zoology, Botany and Astronomy, the same we have given during the present course. Advice as to text-books will be given, cost of same, where obtainable, etc. Blade readers may then follow the studies at their leisure, or otherwise, just as they may see. Of course, they will have no means of knowing, if answers are prepared to each question, whether or not their lessons are properly understood and prepared unless submitted to some competent person to examine and pass upon them, correcting such errors as may appear, giving such explanation as may be necessary, and imparting correct knowledge in each branch undertaken. It is not compulsory for any person to send in answers, but each may do so as they may determine for themselves. The plan, then, is not to charge for the lessons, but to make a charge for the examination and correcting of such lessons as may be sent in. For this a fee of one dollar is to be charged for each lesson examined and passed on. As there are nine lessons in each subject in each school term, this will cost the student but nine dollars instead of ten dollars, now in vogue. To secure the proper attention the examination fee must accompany the lessons. Some may not wish examinations and may be satisfied with such studies as they are able to carry on themselves from the lessons given each month. In that case, the course will cost them nothing more than the cost of the text-books and the usual subscription to the Blade. If only two or three lessons are sent in, the cost will only be in proportion to the number that are sent.

In order to ascertain the wishes of those who have befriended and encouraged the School, we request that any criticism or commendation of the plan here suggested be made with perfect freedom, and the Blade invites communications on the subject. If any one has a better plan to propose, we would be glad to have their opinion.

Soumates and the affinity problem, with their complex analysis, have found their way into the Courts of Georgia, and it is reported that the attraction thus offered drew one of the largest crowds ever gathered in the same room before. And a preacher was playing the star role. It is reported that Rev. Charles Wolferum, a graduate of the Moody Theological Seminary, of Chicago, was on trial for having alienated the affections of Mrs. Marie Lockhart, the wife of a prominent young business man of Atlanta. The preacher admitted, practically, the truth of the charges and in offering an explanation of one of Mrs. Lockhart's visits to him, said that under "existing spiritual conditions" existing between himself and Mrs. Lockhart, she was his "soumate, or affinity, and it was perfectly proper for them to be together." Continuing the preacher



said: "I realize there will be a misunderstanding on the part of the public, but Mrs. Lockhart was paying me one of her usual soulmate visits. This is simply a case of attraction of kindred souls." In very truth it is simply a case of another preacher caught dallying in the primrose path with another man's wife and dodges behind the "soulmate" racket for shelter. If he is simply trying to shield the woman, we would not criticize him, but if he is merely striving to avoid the consequences of his acts, and is deliberately lying, the law should not be too lenient with him. Every despoiler of the happiness of the home, the man who can ruthlessly blight a life and rob woman of her honor, deserves even more than the law allows and should be dealt with accordingly. When this is done by a preacher the offense becomes aggravated, for he has simply used his prerogatives in a direction for which they were not intended and has betrayed the greatest of all trusts imposed on man. Tar and feathers would do well, but the ravisher would still be with us.

\* \* \* \*

We have just put into type ready for publication in the form of a brochure, that splendid address given by President Otto Wettstein, of the Materialist Association, before the convention at Canal Dover, September last, entitled "The Ax to the Root, or a god impossible in Nature." The address which was published in the Blade, at the time of its delivery, has received a great many commendations and much praise. It will make a splendid propaganda pamphlet and should be distributed all over the country. There will be ten thousand copies printed. They will be sold for the benefit of the Materialist Association at the rate of five cents per copy, ten copies for 25 cents, or 100 copies for \$1.00. Orders should now be sent to Otto Wettstein, La Grange, Illinois.

\* \* \* \*

The Blade has on hand ready for publication, another of those fascinating and pointed stories from the pen of May Beals-Hoffman, which will appear shortly. It is a well constructed tale of the "Heretic Killers" and the fictional narrative is drawn from facts that every man and woman of any experience have experienced, more or less. There is a probability that some of these stories, as they have appeared in the Blade, will be put into book form and many a happy hour will be open for those who have it by reading its pages. We will have more to say about this at a later date.

\* \* \* \*

Freethought profits by the past, enjoys the beauties of the present, and strives to encourage a better and happier future—on earth.

• • •

#### THE WOMAN TEMPTED ME.

The priestly fiction that places the responsibility upon woman for the introduction of sin into the world has af-

forded a convenient shelter to many a male biped, but if the records could be obtained we opine they would show that preachers are the first to cast blame upon the woman in order to shield their own sin and conceal their arrant cowardice.

Now comes Rev. W. E. Barton, a Presbyterian preacher, who, speaking before some sort of a conference in Chicago, urged that preachers should be accompanied by a chaperon while making pastoral calls, in order to safeguard and protect them against some designing female who might be waiting upon the dark corner of some street to way-lay and kidnap him. He also advises that no preacher should sit in his study alone with the door unlocked, for fear some giddy choir girl might drop in and create a scandal.

Criminal statistics will furnish enough evidence of the fact that the opposite sex is in need of protection against the designs of preachers, and this over-cautious Joseph has simply hitched his horse to the cart the wrong way. When a man is such a mental and physical weakling, isn't possessed of sufficient moral strength and courage, in the presence of women, that he must needs be chaperoned to be protected, he is a fit candidate for a straight-jacket, and deserves to be incarcerated for life, or until he can overcome his weakness. It is no argument to suggest that preachers are subject to more temptations than other men, for no preacher ever had to face the temptations that come to the average newspaper reporter and many other professional men. Doctors and lawyers, dentists and business men, have as much, some of them more, to do with women than have the average preacher, but the trouble is that the preacher strives to discover an opportunity for moral laches, while honest men endeavor to dodge them.

The suggestion, however, that ministers should be accompanied by a male chaperon while making pastoral calls is, no doubt, intended to furnish the preacher with a witness of his own stripe against the women of his flock. Rather tough on the women, but they still continue to support the system that has made possible this assault upon their veracity and virtuous integrity. What must any woman think of receiving a call from the pastor of her church accompanied by a male chaperon, who is required to watch her every action, listen to every word she utters, retain as much of what she may say as he can and hold in mind to be used in evidence against her should suspicion arise? Why not make it a rule that no preacher should call upon a lady member of his flock, save and except when her husband is present, and if she be unmarried, then have some lady friend present with her? Will not the world suspect there is much more danger likely to come to the woman through the parson than to the parson from the woman? Is any person needing a chaperon fit to fill the office of a spiritual and moral guide? Excessive protesting of innocence very closely resembles a plea of guilty in such cases.

Time was, and not so very long ago, when some ministers

were the objects of human veneration; today they are practically a by-word and a reproach. To say that they now stand in need of chaperons makes more virulent than ever the odium theologium. The world has grown wiser and it now refuses to be duped by the clergy, to believe in their hollow pretenses to preternatural presence or to recognize its nat as usual. The false education and arrant hypocrisy of the clergy have done much to retard the world's progress. They have stood forever in its path and bade it stand, like Joshua's moon in Ajalon. Talk about a chaperon! Forsooth! Is there a man in America today so simple and cunning that he would put his young daughter in the power of the average preacher more readily than that of other men? Is there a banker who would discount the unsecured note of a preacher more readily than that of an infidel?

By all means, give the preachers a chaperon. It is the women who need it, not the preacher. The presence of a chaperon will spare many women from mortification and shame. Give the preacher his chaperon, and let the word duty die out of his vocabulary.

B. A. Plummer, of Forest City, Iowa, a well known liberal, has offered a reward of one thousand dollars, through the local press, for anyone who can successfully prove that Abraham Lincoln was a Christian. We do not expect that he will ever be called upon to make payment.

According to a writer in the War Cry, the organ of the Salvation Army, Charles Darwin, the great naturalist, was unable to understand theology, because, as a young man, he was too fond of sport. Darwin may have revealed a "lack of reverence" concerning the dogmas and doctrines of Christian superstition, but he was too great a naturalist to give much heed to theology.

\* \* \* \*

If Rev. John E. White, of Atlanta, Ga., is properly reported he should make an effort to practice what he is preaching. The papers quote him as saying that ministers, as well as genius, thrive best on poverty and he advises letting the cash stipend go. For every preacher to do likewise would mean a speedy destruction of the church organizations in America.

Is it possible that there can be too much Sunday law enforcement to please the preachers? Demanding a rigid and impartial enforcement of the Sunday closing law at East Liverpool, Ohio, the preachers got it, and then, the reports say, they got angry. If the Sunday law was made for me it must also have been made for my neighbor, and as all are equal before the law, neither my neighbor or myself should be overlooked. Also, keep an eye on the preacher. The best way to get rid of an obnoxious law is to enforce it.

Failing to pay taxes upon four hundred acres of land

in Pennsylvania for the past 44 years, Almighty God has had it sold from under him by a judgment of the court.

About the close of the Civil War, Peter Armstrong founded a new religious cult, and settled down in the hills of Sullivan county, in the state named, and believing that by residing on the hill tops he was that much nearer to heaven, he started a little town known as Celestia, and in the hope of currying favor with the Creator he deeded the 400 acres to Almighty God. The deed was properly acknowledged and recorded. The grantor died and the grantee failed to pay taxes. When the grantor made his will he expressed therein a wish that the property should remain in the eternal care and possession of god. This had a tendency to shut out the hopes of relatives, and the property was never sought after by them. When the tax collector presented them with his bill, which had grown to an enormous sum, they told him that he would have to go to the owner for the tax money. The report does not say whether the collector made any effort to get the money from headquarters, but none of his authorized agents on earth offered to advance the money.

When prayer and law lock horns something definite is sure to happen, and it is no cinch for the prayer gag.

Layton Randall, a tenant on a farm near Noblesville, Ind., had succeeded in retaining the farm without paying rent for two years, claiming that he had been told by the lord to keep the farm and not to remove therefrom until he instructed him so to do. Such a plea befuddled the owner one year ago and he allowed the action against Randall to lapse by statutory limitations, but he was not to be caught napping again. Recently he secured a writ of possession, and accompanied by a constable, proceeded to evict the tenant of the lord. It is said that Randall prayed loud and long for the lord to interfere in his behalf, but both constable and owner were impervious to the plea, or the lord had failed to get telephone connection, for Randall went, and Scott Lester, the owner, again has possession. Most men might indulge in a praying bout provided they had a paying farm in sight.

David H. Moore, Bishop of the M. E. Church, at Cincinnati, denounced in a recent speech a number of gosling preachers by calling them "debt dodgers," and insisted that they must give up using tobacco and pay their debts. Can even a Bishop go so far as to question the honesty of a preacher? Church people, however, have no right to seriously question the truth of the Bishop's statement, for he insisted that an enormous number of unpaid bills had been sent to him upon which payment had been demanded.

The blood and thunder, fire-eating, lion-killing, notoriety-hunting departure of Roosevelt from the United States ought to gratify and satisfy the most depraved appetite. What a great dime novel it would make! Far better did

he retire to solitude and emerge with some useful invention, some new thought to lift up and enlighten the world.

### THE PAINE CENTENNIAL.

But little more than two months now intervene before the date set for the Centennial celebration of the greatest patriot whose feet trod American soil, to take place at New Rochelle.

What are the Freethinkers of America doing,—they who have profited mentally by his labors,—to make this event the success it must be?

In another column is a letter from Secretary Elliott, stating what has taken place in foreign lands to commemorate the name of Paine, and as he suggests, America, of all nations on earth, cannot afford to be laggard in this respect. The Christian world will ignore the event; it may strive to detract from it. The promoters need not look in that direction for support, but the Freethinkers, ever the vanguard of liberty's great army, they who keep up the fight Paine fought in his day, must not neglect this opportunity.

During the past few weeks the daily newspapers of the country have printed columns of news about Paine, his great services to the nation, to humanity and to all posterity. This is, in itself, encouraging in the extreme. It is an indication that in spite of bigoted historians, the name of Thomas Paine is growing into greater reverence and will, ere long, be accorded its rightful place in American history.

The Huguenot Association of New Rochelle, descendants of the famous French organization, have arranged to purchase the old home of Thomas Paine, and the homestead is to be converted into a sort of revolutionary museum for the benefit of visitors, in which some of the Paine relics are to prominently figure. This Huguenot Association is a newly formed body, and its unaided financial resources are inadequate to the demands made upon it by the purchase of this property and its proper equipment, and as this project is of such national importance, they desire to enlist the support of every patriotic citizen in the work it has undertaken.

Next to the Centennial itself, which has been arranged by the Paine Memorial and Historical Association, is the saving of the Paine home, but it is of the Centennial we would now direct immediate attention.

Thaddens B. Wakeman is president; James B. Elliott, of Philadelphia, is secretary, and Dr. E. B. Foote, of New York City, is treasurer, of the combined Paine Societies. It is to their efforts that the Centennial must look for its success, but it is to the financial help of the Freethinkers of America that these gentlemen must look for the means of making it a success. It is needless to say that plans are now being carefully laid for a splendid program of music, songs and speeches, the detail of which will be announced later. The problem of carrying out that program

is to be solved only by the united help of all friends and admirers of Paine.

The Blade's Editor may not be able to attend the Centennial, although it is his earnest desire to do so. To the end that help may be given, the columns of this paper are open to the friends and managers of the movement for the purpose of communication with those who can and are willing to aid. If you cannot attend, you can help to some extent by making a donation to the movement and striving to make this demonstration a new challenge to the orthodox institutions of the land.

We are in receipt of the initial number of "The Common Sense Bible Teacher," and it is all that its name implies. It is published in an acceptable magazine form, and its plan is to conduct a sort of class among its readers for an interpretation of the entire Bible text in the light of evolution. It means, in the end, a new translation of both the old and new testaments under the guidance of evolutionary truth, and is destined to accomplish a work of great usefulness in destroying myth and superstition. It is edited by C. L. Abbott, of St. Paul, Minn., and ought to receive a wide circulation. It is a quarterly publication. Single copies sell at 25 cents. Annual subscription, \$1.00. Write for sample copy free.

Among the pamphlets that recently have come to our desk is one by Eleanor Kirk, of 59 West 89th Street, New York, entitled "Black and Blue and Other Happy Studies." It has 32 pages and while made up of reminiscence it contains enough of modern philosophy to pay one for having read it.

\* \* \*

Wait not until a man is driven to crime by the iron law of necessity, a woman to dishonor, but put forth a hand now in time to avert the sin and shame.

\* \* \*

One new subscriber from each present subscriber would mean that our present circulation would just double itself.

\* \* \*

Send a contribution to Dr. E. B. Foote, 120 Lexington Avenue, New York City, to aid in preparing for the Paine Centennial.

\* \* \*

Any of our friends desiring Dr. Wilson's "A Trip to Rome," or "Dog-fennel in the Orient," by our late editor, C. C. Moore, we have copies on hand which we will sell now at one dollar each and prepay all postal charges thereon. Order a copy now.

\* \* \*

Gone are all the gods from High Olympus. These appeal no more to the wondering minds of men. Gods are but crude conceits of the world's infaney, the coat of many colors with which it clothed its ignorance.

## ABOUT THE PAINE CENTENNIAL.

Time Drawing Near, and All American  
Freethinkers Are Urged to  
Render Aid.(By James B. Elliott.)  
Secretary.

I desire to call attention to the coming celebration of the Centennary of the death of Thomas Paine, at New Rochelle, N. Y., next June, and to as many of the Blade readers who are in sympathy with the Paine Association and its work of outfitting a room in the old homestead occupied by the author and hero of the American Revolution, to send at once \$1.00 to the Treasurer, Dr. E. B. Foote, 120 Lexington Ave., New York City.

The Freethought Association of Philadelphia has appointed J. C. Hannon a delegate and \$15.00 has been donated for expenses. There are many States in the Union that have not a member to represent them. The Blade under the editorship of Chas. C. Moore was able to send Dr. Wilson to Rome. Why not a representative from Ohio and Kentucky?

I have a letter from India, in which the writer informs me that at the Paine Anniversary at Burma, 2,000 natives paid tribute to the genius of Paine's religion. It seems strange to your scribe that the admirers of Paine in India should outnumber those in the country he has so greatly benefited. Is it any wonder that Roosevelt can insult Paine's memory when there are not enrolled as many as a hundred members among the entire population of the United States?

Commodore Barry, who brought to Boston the 2,500,000 lires of silvers, the gift of Louis XVI. to Thomas Paine, for the use of General Washington's Army, is to have a \$20,000 statue in the City of Washington. Barry was a Catholic. They have an organization with 20,000 members. Who will be one of the first from the Blade,—only one dollar? Mr. Mangesarian did not belong to a national organization, hence was ignored by Teddy.

Philadelphia, Pa.

## PROGRAM

Df Philosophical Bible Class Union of  
America at St. Ansgar, Iowa.

Under the leadership of Prof. A. J. Clausen, this Freethought Society is making rapid progress and excellent reports of its work are being given. It has regular meetings and quite a number of students, the latter manifesting great interest in the subjects offered for discussion and investigation. The principal text-book used is "Bible Myths and Their Parallels in Other Religions," by Doane. The program of les-

sons for the month of April, is as follows:

April 4—"Jonah Swallowed by a Big Fish," together with parallel myths in more ancient religions.

April 11—"Circumcision," together with the history of the same practice among more ancient nations.

April 18—Conclusion of Part First, Chapter XI, to 7th line, page 97.

April 25—Conclusion of Part First, Chapter XI, from 7th line to page 110.

(Prof.) A. J. CLAUSEN,  
National Organizer, St. Ansgar, Iowa.

## A BOY AND A PRIEST.

Both Committed Similar Crimes, but How  
Differently Were They Treated by  
the Courts!

(By John F. Clarke.)

I have not been writing to the Blade for some time, for the reason that I have been putting in my spare time writing letters to the open columns of the daily papers.

Nine-tenths of such labor is lost, as far as the public is concerned, for the papers are afraid to publish them. In a city like Baltimore there is so much funny political and religious business going on, that if I had nothing else to do but point out crooked work, it would take all my time.

Recently a boy of 16 forged checks upon the Bank of Commerce, and drew upwards of \$3,000 before he was found out. He had in his possession other checks aggregating \$260,000. Evidently he was the tool of some one else, for the boy was "simple." The State jumped upon him with both feet and socked him into the Maryland penitentiary for a five year term.

A Catholic priest has just been uncovered in a shady transaction, which includes forgery and confidence business, aggregating \$140,000. He is hurried off to Mt. Hope, a lunatic asylum, conducted by Catholics and "aided" by the State, financially.

The alienists gave him a "certificate" of unsound mind, at sight, and the State is perfectly satisfied. He operated upon the banks just as the boy did, only more so, and is fondled and petted, while the boy is making shirts to correct the errors of youth.

The Catholics in Maryland are in a decided minority of the religious population. The religious population is in a decided minority of the whole population. The Catholics dominate the whole community. They have practical immunity, and spend nearly all their time in rendering "first aid" to the recreant ones. If a Protestant escapes the whirlwind that his wild-sowings naturally beget, it is only by Catholic aid. The friendless Protestant gets all that goes with the misdemeanor.

The rationalist seldom figures in court here. Now and then one is "pinched" for

working upon the Lord's day, or gets "raided" in a tavern upon Sunday. I enclose two printed letters in the Evening News to show the scope of my work outside of religious "knocks", which are seldom printed.

Arlington, Md.

## "WANNA BE LIKE JESUS."

But Gypsy Smith Got Cold Comfort at the  
Hands of Cleveland's Chief  
of Police.

(By T. C. Jefferies.)

Even if we have a lot of "I wanna be like Jesus" boys and girls, "let this one thing for our atonement plead:" that we have also a police chief who is fearless; one who refused to furnish Gypsy Smith and his band of tambourine manipulators a mounted escort to accompany him on a brass band parade through certain streets of the city, for the purpose, as the gypsy said, of "soul saving."

The Chief evidently had the gypsy's measure when he called him a grafter, a blatherskite and a malcontent.

The world will doubtless be indulgent with these live-as-Jesus people. Most of them joined the church societies when they were too young to know why, but did so either at the request of a Sunday School teacher or because they were attracted by the music, rendered with soft pedals and much feeling. The gospel hymns which they sang in school were also the slogans of the society, and so they were able, even at the first, to join into at least the musical part of the services.

It is possible that the members of these Christian Endeavor Societies are less orthodox and consequently better than the church pillars; they may want to do something, but know not how. They no doubt are innocent and well-meaning enough and may sometimes do kind deeds to the sick and needy; their social side may also be pleasant; but they are on a bad road and if they keep on going they will find themselves in bad company.

For the benefit of outsiders, however, I want to say that Clevelanders are not all crazy; that Cleveland is not a hotbed of orthodoxy as some may believe. One thing we lack is a well organized society and this we hope to have in the near future.

Cleveland, O.

## Is Now Studying.

THERMOPOLIS, WYO.—I would like some instruction in geology. What would be your charges for the same. Would like to get the whole bunch of papers at once or in book form, because I do not get mail very often.—A. L. LARSON.



## The Blade's Correspondence

### We Did Not Know Him.

BRACEWELL, IOWA.—I suppose you did not know any Freethinker by the name of Daniel Boyer of Russell, Iowa? I do not know he was a Freethinker but from his dying words as apperred in the paper first, I inferred he was; these were copied all over the state, but the last were not like the first, they made him say the very opposite to what the earliest papers made him say. He had gone to Alaska and his dead body was found by the Indians and on his person was found a letter written to his sister Imogene Prather of Russell, Iowa, in which he states he had reached the end of his earthly career and winds up by saying: "I face death without fear or hope, to me it is the great unknown." Later on the papers make him say: "I face death without a fear, a hope to me it is the great beyond." As the writer shows himself intelligent and the first version makes complete sense, and the last gives no meaning, I felt sure his words were tampered with to make him appear as a Christian. I wrote to his sister for his last words, but she puts them this way: "I face death without fear, a hope to me it is the great unknown." So if there has been any change in his words for religious purposes they were done by his own sister. I notice his sister fails to tell me, as I had asked her, what his religious views were. Since I cannot see how the unknown can be an objection of hope I cannot but suspect some little change has been made in the wording. If further investigation reveals the fact that the deceased was a Freethinker or Agnostic I am going to see that he gets justice. Of course I do not want to wrong the woman in the least. She may be representing the matter correctly, but there are grounds to suspect otherwise.—A. A. SNOW.

From a Contemporary.

ST. LOUIS, MO.—I have been reading with great interest your account of the recent debate. It's great fun to watch them squirm. The average preacher never really heard a good freethought argument in his life; but in the theological seminaries they set up straw men, label them "Free Thought Champions" and proceed to lambast the innocent men of straw. This is so easy that the budding theologs get the idea that they could just everlastingly

knock the wadding out of a real "Infidel" if they were only fortunate enough to find one brave enough to go against them. So when the Freehtught David does come out and challenge the Christian Goliath its funny to watch the progress of their emotions—from confidence to surprise, anger, exasperation, exhaustion, fear, panic, and flight. One such experience is enough to last a preacher a life time. He very seldom wants to play a return engagement. Success to you.—W. C. COPE, Ed. Wheel of Life.

### Takes the New Book.

MOSIER, ORE.—I want you to put me on list for one copy of the Hausman's book on Evolution. Shall send price of it and \$1.50 for Blade first time I am at the post-office. Am very busy on the farm now, and have not been to postoffice since January 22. My neighbors bring the mail.

I am glad to see the Blade growing in worth and subscriptions too. Science and religion are as far apart as justice and injustice. Such terms as "Christian Science" are absurd. Why just as well say, a learned idiot or a peaceful tenpest.—R. W. SIMPSON, Box 54.

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